

SELECTBOARD MEETING

Approved Minutes

August 26, 2013

7:00pm Calais Town Hall

Attending: Denise Wheeler, John Brabant, Scott Bassage, Toby Talbot, Rose Pelchuck, Rolf Mueller, Will Walters, Conrad W. Smith, Alfred Larrabee, Steve Cusick, Stephanie Kaplan, Tom McArdle, Debbie Haskins, Sam Haskins, Dick Rouelle, Mary Eileen Mooney, Ieva Bradley, Karin McNeill, Mary Elder Jacobsen, Bill Davis, Annie Christopher, Peter Backman, Lesa Burns and Jon Binhammer.

Actions:

The Nature Conservancy - Jon Binhammer, Protection Director of The Nature Conservancy, came before the Selectboard this evening to outline three main objectives relating to land in Calais. Mr. Binhammer provided a map showing the conserved land off Lightening Ridge Road (Chickering Bog) and the adjacent 108-acre parcel the Nature Conservancy hopes to purchase to also conserve (outlined on map in red). Firstly, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board have been asked to provide funding to support this land acquisition. They won't know until December if they get funded but have reason to believe they will get funded. The second objective is to request partial funding of \$15,000.00 from our town's Conservation Fund. Jon Binhammer has already approached the Conservation Commission for their support. The third objective is to clear up an error in the way The Nature Conservancy property is listed in town. Jon Binhammer stated that when the property tax exemption expires The Nature Conservancy plans to enroll all the Calais property it owns in to the Current Use Program and will then begin to pay property taxes on it.

Steve Cusick, Conservation Commission Chair, said the Conservation Commission has unanimously approved using \$15,000.00 from the Conservation Fund to put towards the purchase of this parcel. Scott Bassage asked Jon Binhammer to work with the listers to clear up the error in the way the present land is listed. Toby Talbot asked when the deadline is for funds from the Conservation Fund and Jon Binhammer responded noting there is sufficient time to act. The asking price for the land-locked parcel is \$65,000.00. The Nature Conservancy asked for a letter of support from the town. Steve Cusick will draft a letter of support while the Selectboard has time to digest the information provided this evening. In closing, Jon Binhammer stated the property will be managed as a natural area and have a public access (non-mechanized use only) along with a conservation easement.

Road Signage on #10 Pond Road – Several townspeople attended tonight. (*See individual comments/observations as recorded by Selectboard Member, John Brabant at the end of the Minutes.*)

Some comments and/or suggestions included:

Limit one parking spot to one per dock,

The intersection with Mirror Lake Road and #10 Pond Road can get very congested,

Reduce the speed limit on the road,

Limit no parking to one side of the road,

Dock owners should be able to enjoy their docks,

Speeding vehicles,

The road has changed,

Yesterday counted 25 kayaks on private property, and

Absolutely utilization has increased.

Tom McArdle, Assistant Public Works Director for the City of Montpelier and resident, said a courtesy notice to landowners should have been given in his opinion. Tom spoke about the parking ordinance and the need for a sign speaking to the ordinance you are enacting. Tom said nothing really needs to be done except a 35-foot clear zone at the intersection with Mirror Lake Road and #10 Pond Road. Tom questioned the need for or use of a seasonal ordinance or year round ordinance since summer congestion is a concern. There are areas of limited sight distance, look at the geometry of a road and assume a car was parked there.

Peter Backman was in favor of having no parking on the pond side; Annie Christopher agreed with parking on one side only. Annie is not opposed to having a parking permit for dock owners; the number of people is up and

they are not Calais. Lesa Burns said she agrees with others about the speed limit; it is a recreation community. Tom McArdle suggested looking at the Secretary of State's website for speed enforcement options, stating the town needs to have a good enforcement plan. Denise Wheeler said Lt. Paul White, VSP, drove by and said that reducing the speed limit and allowing parking on one side would be reasonable. The Selectboard thanked everyone for making the effort for coming out to the meeting and voicing their concerns.

Town Invoices and Road Commissioner's Orders of the Day - The Selectboard reviewed and processed the invoices and orders of the day as per usual protocol.

Dot.gov Registration Reimbursement – Scott Bassage made a motion to authorize Rose Pelchuck to pay the Dot.gov annual domain name registration fee for the town's website and to have the town reimburse Rose Pelchuck the cost in the amount of \$125.00. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0-1. Rose abstained from the vote.

Approval of July 22nd Minutes – Toby Talbot made a motion to approve the Minutes. The motion was seconded. One amendment was made. The motion was voted on and carried 5-0.

Approval of July 29th Minutes – Toby Talbot made a motion to approve the Minutes as written. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

Approval of August 15th Minutes – Toby Talbot made a motion to approve the Minutes. The motion was seconded. Two corrections were made. The motion was voted on and carried 5-0.

PACE – Even though we authorized the formation of a PACE district, it has not gotten off the ground. There are new documents that need to be reviewed and signed for the PACE district in Calais to begin. More information will be forthcoming at the next meeting. Bill Powell is our contact for the PACE program.

CVRPC & CVEDC Proposed Merger – A consolidation final forum for Selectboards and the public will be held Tuesday, September 10th at 6:30pm at the Chamber of Commerce Building in Berlin. The vote on the merger will be October 8, 2013. Our representative to the CVRPC, Rolf Mueller, reported it seems as though the small towns are against the merger and the large towns are in favor of it with the exception of the City of Montpelier, which is against it and Woodbury is for it. Denise Wheeler will attend the September 10th meeting and requested one other Selectboard member to attend as well.

Letter to VTrans re: VT Route 14 Bridge Project for 2016 –The Selectboard needs to formulate a letter stating which option of road closure relating to the bridge replacement the town is in favor of. Public hearings were held and three options were reviewed by AOT. The town would receive \$10,000.00 to use at our discretion for law enforcement, signage, gravel and the like. The bridge contractor gets cash incentives for each day they finish ahead of schedule. Toby Talbot made a motion to recommend to the Vermont Agency of Transportation that we are in favor of the nine-day complete road closure option in order to replace this bridge on Route 14. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0. Denise Wheeler will write the letter.

Road Commissioner Update - Alfred Larrabee reported new culverts were installed on Sand Hill Road, noting it took longer because he found underground phone wires down the middle of the road. County Road has been shim coated and a contractor will be hired to paint white lines on the shoulders. The lines can be either at 10-feet or 9-feet, which can provide a bit more room for bicyclists. Alfred was instructed to get the contractor lined up to paint the white lines and the Selectboard will decide on line placement at a later date. Alfred has been getting complaints about no streetlights in East Calais village. Denise Wheeler will contact Green Mountain Power to get the lights back on. Alfred asked about more road projects for he and the road crew. Denise Wheeler said to do more general maintenance, like grading, cleaning ditches and fixing potholes. Discussion ensued about various projects. John Brabant reiterated we are all in agreement fixing what is there is maintenance, fixing clay boils is routine maintenance. Alfred and the road crew plans to fix the clay boil on Moscow Woods Road beginning September 3rd. The road will be closed for seven to ten days; proper notice will be given. Mary Eileen is in favor of putting a stop sign at the intersection of Jack Hill Road and Moscow Woods Road.

Stephanie Kaplan spoke about the Roads Advisory Committee's work and encouraged the road crew to not undertake any major projects until such time as the committee's work is done. The committee is writing new standards to protect the rural character of the town. Stephanie also spoke about mulching. Alfred just bought 150 bales of mulch hay. Roads Advisory Committee's next meeting is Thursday.

Curtis Pond Dam – We need to keep the property ownership on our radar.

Other Business - Toby Talbot has had a request for Sheriff speed control on Lightening Ridge for the first couple weeks of school. Denise Wheeler will call Sheriff, Sam Hill to request the patrols.

Tentative Agenda for September 9th Meeting:

- Village center designation: Conservation Commission
- Signage for Recycling & Trash Depot
- Roads Advisory Committee Update
- Curtis Pond Island continued discussion
- Appoint Second Constable and Second Animal Control Officer
- PACE with Bill Powell

John Brabant made a motion to adjourn at 9:35pm. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Pelchuck
Selectboard Member and Administrative Assistant

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***Individual comments/observations as recorded by Selectboard Member, John Brabant  
Regarding parking on #10 Pond Road***

- Karin McNeill – parking OK
- Mary Elder Jacobson – parking OK, speed a greater concern, maybe limit # of cars or designate locations where parking OK and where not, 30 mph is too fast for that road e.g. River street in Montpelier is 35. If there is parking on one side of the road, it is better on the pond side, with sunglasses on, can't see it.
- Stevie Bradley – here as a neutral observer, amazed got so ugly so quickly
- Mary Mooney – never had a problem with #10 except when muddy, although only contention would be that parking only be allowed on one side of road and speed limit coming from North Calais Road, says 25 mph, what to do if other people come from other, they need to know the rules so signs.
- Sam Haskins – question, why did signs go up so quick?
- Debbie Haskins (92 Mirror Lake Rd). – She said she is the infamous lady who started all of this. When heard there was an issue, moved her car. Parking OK, speeding is the big issue. Want to say things have changed, more trees. Road has been changed, trees have been cut, road widened.
- Tom McArdle – regulatory signs generate reaction as we have found out. Involve the public in anything we do. Under Title 24, Selectboards need to follow a process to enact an ordinance. When post a road, post it so a stranger knows exactly what that sign means. Posting was very unclear; sign needs to speak to the ordinance that we have enacted. No vote was recorded in the Meeting Minutes and testimony presented was not in the Minutes. No ordinance on GAR Road. Per Denise, there is a question as to ownership of GAR Road. Two curves on the roadway with limited sight distance and there are areas where there is good sight distance. Comes down to whether you can go around a large vehicle. No prob-

lem with cars parked on one side. Road is an average of 19 feet wide. Can take emergency measures where emergency vehicles are being obstructed. Near intersection of Mirror Lake Road, should have a 35-foot clear zone should be established... Look at Vermont Municipal Law Basics publication. Who does your law enforcement? Reason for asking question, if you don't have enforcement in mind, have residents enforcing it, which is not a good way to go. Per Denise, VSP LT Paul White checked out the road and could see where parking one-side only might be a good thing to think about.

- Dick Rouelle – didn't see how entire road could be posted. Said he was the greatest offender.
- Peter Backman – having people park only on the woods side of the road and not the pond side left enough room. Hate to see signage put up, but if limiting parking on one side only, would be fine. Also, like speed cart put on Foster Hill Road by his house. Read an article that Malibu CA is... Did the Women's Relief Corp file for a permit for 45 parking spots?
- Annie Christopher – OK to just have parking on one side of the road. A lot of people from outside the community that come to this lake. Wouldn't be opposed to a permit being required. Foster Homestead land is being used as if it were a state park.
- Lesa Burns – uses Peter's dock as she rents a house from him. People are using the dock without authorization and she doesn't want people to think that they are authorized. It is a recreational community.
- Rose Pelchuck – thanked everybody for coming tonight noting not all their comments would be noted in the Minutes, as it is a difficult task to listen attentively and record at the same time.
- Will Walters from The Hardwick Gazette – asked about getting copies of the recordings of our meetings. They are available at the Town Office during regular business hours.

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